

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the reasons that follow. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Claims 1-22 and 39-40 are pending in this application. No claims have been amended, added or cancelled.

Claims 1, 7-11, 14, 19-21 and 39-40 are rejected under §103(a) as being obvious over Whittaker in view of Van Oort. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present application was filed on September 13, 2001. The Whittaker patent was filed on October 25, 2002. Whittaker has an earliest prior art date under §102(e)/103(a) of October 25, 2002.

Therefore, Whittaker is not prior art with respect to the present application because the filing date and publication dates of Whittaker are later than the filing date of the present application. Since Whittaker is not prior art with respect to the present application, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 1 over Whittaker and Van Oort should with withdrawn.

Claims 2-4, 12-13, 15-17 and 22 are rejected under §103(a) over Whittaker and Van Oort in view of Ohsaki et al. (US 6,202,492). Claims 5-6 and 18 are rejected under §103(a) over Whittaker and Van Oort in view of Braun et al. (US 4,781,363). These rejections are also respectfully traversed because Whittaker is not prior art with respect to the present application.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 9/13/06

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